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## WITHOUT FURTHER DELAY.

IN THIRTY-FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

Full fathom five thy father lies;  
Of his bones are coral made;  
Those are pearls that were his eyes.

ALL night long the storm had been raging, but with the dawn the wind had abated; instead of roaring as a north-west gale, trumpeting and screaming into the throat of the broad hill-encompassed estuary of Aberhirnant, it whispered softly in a balmy southerly breeze. The tide had run out, and a great expanse of yellow-ribbed sands lay glinting in the bright rays of the wintry sun. A mile away at the bar the sea was still breaking heavily, and rolling in huge masses of foam and spray; but along the sands, crisp and curling ripples came hurrying in, touched with all kinds of tints of pearl and opal by the slanting beams of the rising sun.

A small wooden pier ran out into the mouth of the river, and the shore behind this pier formed a little bay, which was the harbour of Aberhirnant. The town itself was a crescent of houses ranged upon the curving shores of the bay—small neat houses, for the most part tenanted by the wives of the coasting masters of the port. Behind the houses rose the flank of a steep hill, the summit of which bounded the view from the pier; but had you been farther out at sea, you would have seen, slope rising over slope, precipice crowned by crag, the higher summits veiled by light fleecy clouds, which the storm had driven in from the sea: a wild mountain region margined by a coast of iron. Great masses of foam were still lurking in all corners and crevices of the pier, in all sheltered hollows of the sands; but except these, and a line of drift the angry waves had washed against the houses which lined the bay, there were no other relics of the storm that had passed. A few seafaring men were lounging at the pier-head, scanning the waters with their glasses, but not a sail was to be seen; the brown waves went up and down, but neither mast nor hull broke the undulating lines.

'She must have stood out to sea again, Frank,' said a man, of seamed and furrowed face, the eyes of which were the centres of bewildering networks of wrinkles; a kindly face, you would say, and shrewd, and yet that of an irritable and nervous man. By his side was a figure dressed in a blue pilot suit, ornamented with brass buttons, bearing the device of a crown and anchor: this was the officer of customs; the other was Evan Rowlands, the banker of Aberhirnant. Banker and ship-owner too; hence, perhaps, the anxious glances he cast over the empty sea.

'She must have made an offing,' reiterated Rowlands peevishly, in answer to a grave shake of the head from the official.

'What do you say, John Jones? Could she have got back to sea against that nor'-west gale?'

'Well, indeed,' said John, squirting a small cataract of tobacco-juice from his mouth, 'it's very possible. She very good sailor, close-hauled; yes, indeed.'

'It's possible, of course,' said Frank Williams, the custom-house man; 'but is it likely?'

'Deed, I can't say.—But see, Mr Frank, what's this coming up with the tide?'

The tide had now turned, and in the centre of the stream was running up with some force, although by the pier its influence was not yet felt. In the very middle of the river was floating a mass of shattered timber, with an iron bolt sticking out here and there.

John Jones jumped into his boat, which lay at the foot of the pier, without another word, and pulling quickly after the moving object, reached it, hitched a rope to it, and towed it slowly back. By this time a little crowd had collected. Women with hurriedly arranged garments; men winking and blinking, the stupor of the night not yet shaken from them; a few children, dragged half-naked from their beds—such the crowd which clustered together at the head of the pier, looking up at the tall, commanding figure of the banker, who, standing on the framework of the capstan, alternately cast his glances toward the approaching boat, or swept the dull horizon with his eyes.

The mass of timber which the boatman had in tow came lazily rolling through the water ; each tug of the rope, as the boatman straightened his back to the stroke, caused it to plunge and wallow in the sea. Except that it was wreck of some kind, no one could say what its form or shape.

'*Menevia's Pride* is as safe as I am !' cried Rowlands from his platform, in answer to some low-toned question from the crowd. All the faces brightened up at this, for *Menevia's Pride* was the pride of Aberhircnant also. She had been built on the sands at Aber. Her master and her crew were all Aberhircnant men. The very dog that was on board of her had been a puppy of that stout old bitch which now stood wagging her tail and whining on one of the timbers of the pier.

All of a sudden there was a great movement in the crowd, for the wreck in the harbour had turned right over, shewing a splintered taffrail rail, and painted thereon in large white letters, RIDE.

A low groan, a wail, rose from the people.

'Fools !' shouted Rowlands, 'what's RIDE ? Why, there are hundreds of ships with RIDE in their names. Dozens from this port alone. Why, there's *Arthur's Bride*, and *Bridegroom*, and ever so many more. But it isn't any of our ships, I tell you. Do you hear !'

But the women would not be convinced ; they had felt the touch of terror and incredulity ; dread overspread their minds, and that blank, bewilderment which the heart feels at the possibility of a loss which may, unknown, have already befallen it. But the men rallied round the banker, and urged a hundred different reasons why this shattered taffrail should belong to any other vessel than *Menevia's Pride*. Then, whilst doubt and irresolution kept down grief and lamentation, a profound throb of emotion made itself felt through the crowd. All turned away from the sea and the sky, from the boat bobbing up and down, from the wreck twisting and twirling, from the banker on the capstan, from the sea-mews screaming over his head—turned with one accord to a figure on the pier, that of a woman, lying fainting on the rough boards of the flooring, a dog licking her face.

But such a dog ! his hair soaked and matted, his claws torn and bleeding, his head battered and bruised, and his eyes ! ah ! what weariful, miserable eyes they were, as though they still reflected all the struggles of dying men ! So weariful and pitiful were the dumb looks of that poor dog, that all the stout seafaring men that stood around were fain to wipe their eyes with their jacket-sleeves, whilst the women in a body threw despairing cry to Heaven, and then, clasped in each other's arms, wailed and wept in unavailing grief.

'Poor thing, poor thing !' said all the seafaring men in concert. They meant the wife of the master of *Menevia's Pride*, who lay fainting on the ground, the dog licking her face. There was no more hope for her, poor creature ; the dog had brought her at least that message from the dead. There was a handkerchief knotted to his collar, the husband's handkerchief. Mort, the dog, had come home again ; the rest, where were they ?

Rowlands descended from the capstan, his face pale and troubled.

'Dear me, what is the matter ?—My dear Mrs Pugh,' he said, taking the woman, now supported in the arms of her friends, by the hand, 'why do

you take on so ? *Menevia's Pride* is as safe as I am.—The dog ? Pooh ! he jumped overboard.'

Gwen Pugh, the master's wife, looked about her bewildered, not knowing what to believe—the smooth voice of the man, or the dog shivering and whining by her side.

'Listen to Evan Rowlands, *anvyl bach*,' cried the old cronies in chorus. 'The dog jumped overboard. Evan is safe ; Evan Rowlands says so. Dear, dear ! who would have thought it !'

'Take my arm, Gwen Pugh,' said the banker—'take my arm, and walk home. Dear heart ! you look very pale, and no wonder, with the fright you got. But don't cry any more, Gwen ; *Menevia's Pride* is as safe as my bank ; and Evan will be home presently to scold you, and shake his old friends by the hand.'

Gwen Pugh, a pretty swarthy woman, dressed in short petticoat and bedgown, took the banker's arm, and they walked towards the street together, the rest of the crowd following at a little distance.

'Dear ! what a good-hearted man he is !' was the chorus among the crowd. The good heart was that of Evan Rowlands.

## CHAPTER II.

Thou art not for the fashion of these times,  
Where none will sweat but for promotion.

From the esplanade of Aberhircnant one side-street only branches off, a short street ending in a chapel ; this street lines the mouth of a little gorge running down from the mountains to the sea. On one side of the street is the bank, a three-cornered stone building, with small narrow windows and heavy slated roof ; on the opposite side is another dull-looking stone building, on the door of which is painted, in half-obliterated white letters, Mr Arthur Rowlands, Solicitor, Stamp Office.

If you followed the road beyond the Methodist Chapel, you presently came to a steep shoot, which ascended the side of a ravine, and lost itself among the hills. This was the old Aberhircnant and Glandovey road, now almost disused, except by farmers coming to market, as the new road following the line of the coast, and cut out in places in the face of the rock, is much more safe and convenient, though not so direct.

Arthur Rowlands, solicitor and distributor of stamps for the county of Caermon, is a young man of some four-and-twenty years, residing at this present time with his father, the banker. It was well known in Aberhircnant that he was going to marry Mary Roberts, the pretty daughter of the rector of the adjoining parish of Llanfechan, and that the wedding was to come off on Christmas-day, now close at hand. A house had been taken for him a mile or so up the estuary, in a pleasant little glen facing to the south, and appropriately named Bodheulog, or the abode of the sun ; and sundry van-loads of furniture had already arrived. All the people of Aberhircnant were in a state of chronic excitement as to the approaching wedding. There were to be triumphal arches and flags ; and the well-to-do inhabitants were to feast each other at the *Wynnstay Arms*, whilst the poor people were to be fed in the Wesleyan Chapel ; and there were to be fireworks at night, and a bonfire on the top of Mynydd Maur, and all kinds of similar delights.

Had it happened, indeed, that *Menevia's Pride*

had been lost and her crew drowned within sight, and almost within hail of their homes, then surely this programme would have to be abridged very much, and the rejoicings entirely stopped. In England, the loss of a few common people, more or less, would not be accepted as a valid excuse for interrupting the enjoyments of their betters; but in Caerleon they are yet uncivilised, still influenced by the sympathies of blood and race, still rejoice and mourn in concert, still own the ties of kindred and affinity.

Spite of all this, however, the people of Aberhirnant were specially addicted to backbiting and slandering each other; and there was no man in Aberhirnant whose tongue was fiercer, and whose scandals were more virulent, than Dr Lewis Owen, usually known as the Hen Doctor. Don't run away with the idea that he was a practitioner amongst poultry; he was simply the 'old doctor.' The rival surgeon, whose current name was 'Jack Bach,' being a young and rising man, whilst Dr Owen was now nearly seventy, this title was given him as a distinction. The Hen Doctor was a tall, old man, with eagle nose and bald head; he wore a conical white hat with broad flapping brim, a cut-away Quaker's coat, a bunch of seals at his fob, trousers usually very threadbare and very short, reaching little below his knees; a pair of hand-knitted stockings, and low shoes tied with strings, completed his attire. You would have suspected him to be a Quaker till you heard him speak, when you would notice that his conversation was garnished with expletives to a greater extent than is customary among 'Friends.' The Hen Doctor hadn't joined in the subscriptions to the funds to provide for the expenses of the wedding rejoicings.

'They'll be bankrupt before the year's out; yes, indeed!' he growled in reply to any solicitation to contribute.

Perhaps one reason why the doctor was so embittered against the banker and his son was, that he himself had been a candidate for the office of distributor of stamps, but had been beaten by the superior political influence of Mr Rowlands. The office was a lucrative one, as the county contained the cathedral town of St Padarn, which had a local probate court of its own, and the distributor of the county received a commission on all the moneys paid for proving wills and taking out administrations. This year especially the receipts would be great. Old Sir Samuel Bogoak, the great millionaire of Manchester, had lately died at his seat of Castle Deudnant in this county, and having left the bulk of his property to an adopted son, the duties to be paid on his bequests would be something enormous, and the corresponding commission to the distributor a very comfortable sum.

The prospect of this comfortable sum of money had hastened Arthur Rowlands' marriage. It would furnish handsomely the new house at Bodheulog, and start the young couple on their career with a sufficient balance at the bank. Arthur Rowlands and Mary Roberts had waited for each other some years, for the old banker, although he was not penurious, was very grudging of ready money. No; he wouldn't furnish a house for his son; let him wait till he could save enough to do it himself; that was the way he, Evan, had to do when he was married.

Evan Rowlands lived in a large ashlar-built house, standing on a terrace cut out of the side of

a hill, and sheltered from the north and east. It commanded a magnificent view of the sea, of the estuary, and of the mountains bounding it on each side. A carriage-road wound up to it by easy gradients, and by that road it would take you some time to get to the house; but by a footpath running up the breast of the hill you could reach it from the town in a few minutes. By this footpath young Rowlands must have run up to the house, when he burst into the breakfast-room, shouting: 'Good news! Good news!'

'Ah, ah!' said the banker, looking out from that network of wrinkles which framed his eyes, with his peculiar glance, half-puzzled, half-shrewd; 'good news, eh? And what's the good news? Something to do with Mary Roberts, no doubt.'

'Wrong, father, wrong! Kate! Winny! guess what the good news is.'

'Don't torment us, Arthur, please; we give it up.'

*'Arthur's Bride'*, reported lost in the late storm, has just been signalled off the bar, and will come in with the flood. She has lost spars and rigging, and is very much shattered, and will have to be laid up for repairs as soon as the weather moderates; but she's safe, you see, father, safe. Hurrah!'

'Hurrah!' shouted the girls. It wasn't to be expected that old Rowlands would shout hurrah. Perhaps the change that came over his face, as he heard the news, was caused by the revulsion of feeling arising from the loosening of the strain upon him, the relief from suspense and anxiety. However, he soon recovered himself, received the congratulations of his family with a smiling face, and muttering something about calls of business, took his way down the road to the bank.

'Arthur,' said Winny, his sister taking him by the arm, 'I think this is a good omen for you. I think Arthur's bride is destined to good luck, and I know that she deserves it. But oh, Arthur, think of the poor woman, Gwen, the captain's wife! That which makes us so glad must make her so sorrowful, for surely the wreck that came ashore belonged either to the one or the other; and if our ship is safe, where is *Menevia's Pride*?'

But Arthur was too happy to have much sympathy to spare for Gwen Pugh, and went off presently to order his horse for a ride to Llanfechan.

When the banker reached his office, it was not long past nine, and the bank was not opened; he sank down into his easy-chair in the little dark back room which formed the 'parlour'; the shutters were closed, and the room in a sort of dusky gloom. Rowlands lit a candle, took out some papers, burnt one or two, and then resting his head on his arms, seemed to fall into a kind of mental stupor.

He hardly stirred or moved for more than half an hour, though at times he would sigh softly, but heavily.

Presently, John, the chief clerk—there were but two, John and a little boy—came in to the outer office, and began to unlock the safes and take out the books and ledgers wanted for the day's work.

'John!' said Rowlands feebly.

'What's the matter, master?' cried John, hurrying in, somewhat scared at his master's look and tone. 'Is anything wrong?'

John was the only man in whom Rowlands reposed his confidence. He didn't confide anything to Arthur or to his daughters respecting business matters, but to John he told everything.

'John, I'm afraid *Menevia's Pride* is gone.'

'Well, they do say so, master ; but depend upon it, it isn't true. But why take on about it so ? You're too kind-hearted, master.'

'No ; it isn't that, John ; but look here : I've underwritten *Menevia* for three thousand ; she's lost. I insured *Arthur* for five thousand ; she's saved !'

'*Anwyd dad!*' said John ; 'three thousand pounds ! Name o' goodness, what a loss to you ! But never mind,' he went on briskly ; 'you'll make it up, Mr Rowlands, *bach*. You will give me less salary for a year, I daresay—it was lucky you didn't raise it when I asked you last week—and you'll dismiss Thomas : no doubt it will be only a little more work for me. Oh, you'll make it up, master ; only, don't fret.'

'John, I can't help fretting. You know how losses have crowded upon me ; how these cursed ships that I took for Lewis's debts have been preying upon me. Bottomry bonds, port dues, refittings, and all kinds of pulls upon me ; and my captains coming home in ballast without a pound in their pockets, and telegraphing to me for money. Oh, it's devilish ! Another five hundred at the least that wretched *Bride* will cost me ; and I had hoped to get five thousand by her !'

'But oh, Mr Rowlands, *bach*, you didn't hope that she was lost, did you ? Oh, that would be wicked ; that would be going against the Bible. You that's a magistrate and all ! Oh, Mr Rowlands !'

'But, John, it would have saved me.'

'Well, you know, master,' said John, 'you've only got yourself to thank for it. You would go meddling with those nasty ships, and muddling all your money away in the sea.'

Rowlands groaned.

'And didn't I warn you against going into the insuring business ?'

'Name o' goodness, stop your jabber !' cried Rowlands, angrily arousing. 'What good is all that chatter ? Why didn't you do this, why didn't you do that ? Go to your work, you fool !'

'All right,' said John. 'Is it worth while to take down the shutters ?'

'What do you mean ?' cried Rowlands, looking at him with staring eyes.

'You know very well what I mean. There's three thousand pounds in gold, and that's all to carry on with to-day. Now, have you brought any more with you, Mr Rowlands ?—now ! There will be the quarry checks coming in directly, Mr Rowlands—now ! All gold then, Mr Rowlands —now ! Give me your orders, master—now !'

'John, John, if you begin to turn against me, I'll give up. Am I ruined, John ? Is it come to that ? And the children, and Arthur ! O John ! it will kill me.'

The clock in the church tower hard by tolled out the hour—one, two, three, four, five.—At the sixth stroke, Rowlands sprang to his feet.

'*Anwyd dad !* and I forgot ! John, tear the shutters down. Heaven grant there are no customers !'

There was a clank and rattle of bars for a moment as the clerk let in the light of day ; the flame of the candle on the table disappeared in the glory of the sun. The last shutter taken down was that of the glass half-door which opened from the bank into the little lobby outside ; as that came

down, they saw framed in the window the half-length figure of a man, of eagle beak and long lantern jaws. The man was taking a pinch of snuff with one hand ; in the other he held a stout oaken staff uplifted, as if he were about to strike the door. It was the Hen Doctor.

#### T H E W E E D .

WHEN Christopher Columbus discovered the island of San Salvador in 1492, he sent two Spaniards into the interior to examine the country. They related, on their return, that they had met many of the inhabitants holding some herbs in their hands, and inhaling the smoke, when lighted. This little firebrand was called *tobaco*, a word which has been adopted all over Europe, and in Havana. They still say, *probar un tobaco*, for smoking a cigar. It was to Sir Walter Raleigh that we owe the introduction of this favourite indulgence into England ; whilst Jean Nicot, ambassador of France to Spain, brought it to his own country, it being already well known in Spain and Portugal. Catharine de' Medici adopted the new plant, imagining it to be a cure for every ill that flesh is heir to, and in her honour it became the Queen's herb, the Medicean herb, and the holy herb. The fashion being thus introduced, the use of tobacco extended itself by degrees, though not without meeting with considerable opposition. Amurath IV. commanded that those who took it should be beaten in a mortar ; the shah of Persia contented himself with cutting off the delinquents' noses ; Innocent VIII. condemned them to eternal ruin ; and James I. wrote a book against them full of wise sayings. All was in vain ; tobacco was to conquer its adversaries, triumph over every obstacle, and become a strange kind of aliment, which the tyranny of habit was to render indispensable to a great part of the population. Tobacco is now consumed in every possible form ; the makers try to invent new combinations, in order to satisfy the passion of certain amateurs who appreciate a good cigar as others do a glass of old wine. Smoking has superseded the snuff-box of our forefathers ; it is allowed everywhere—in public gardens, clubs, cafés, and most private houses ; perhaps, after a time, it will be so at the theatre, as it now is in Holland.

As the use of the weed increased, it was adulterated in every possible shape. Under its name, cabbage-leaves, walnut-leaves, seaweed, and hay were smoked. Bark, peat-moss, the roots of Iceland moss, were pulverised with many other inventions. Real amateurs were at great expense to get it pure from Holland, which sold the real products of Varinas and Virginia with the mark of the three kings. Such was the case until the early part of this century ; in France, at least, it led to the government taking the manufacture into its own hands ; and a characteristic anecdote will shew why this exclusive monopoly was commenced. At the beginning of the year 1810, a ball was given at the Tuilleries, when the Emperor remarked a lady pass before him whose dress was splendidly ornamented with diamonds. He inquired who could be so rich as to make such a display. The reply was that Madame R— was the wife of a tobacco-manufacturer. The hint was not lost upon Napoleon I. ; and by the 20th December, a decree had appeared commanding that henceforward the

sale and manufacture of tobacco should belong exclusively to the state. As experience was needed, the old makers were employed; but they were rigorously watched; each manufacturer had his own ideas, and would not change; opposite results were obtained—what was good tobacco to-day was execrable in a week, though it came out of the same primary elements. Science was called in to help; a director-general was appointed; the best pupils of the Polytechnic School were placed under instruction; and every smoker will allow that there is no relation between the crude article of former days and that of the present. The mysteries of fermentation, the mixture of different growths, the splendid machines which have superseded the work of the old blind horses which turned the mill, and the chemical analysis of the leaves, are all scientifically treated.

The government manufactory of Gros-Caillou, on the Quai d'Orsay, where these preparations are carried on, is not an elegant building. There is the laboratory, where more poisons are distilled than a Borgia ever dreamed of. Within its walls, lined with pure white tiles, a rod dipped into the dangerous essence of nicotine (from Jean Nicot), and applied to the throat of a cat or rabbit, produced the most frightful convulsions, and almost immediate death. In the court opening into it is the botanic garden, consisting of eight or ten old casks, in which are placed different kinds of earth, as it is well known that the elements of the soil and the culture go far to produce certain qualities of tobacco. Here the students treat the plants to different varieties of salts or gases. Chemical analysis has demonstrated that the combustible power is specially due to salt of potassium—all that is grown on soil that possesses little of it burns badly. By these experiments, the proper manure can be furnished to any ground on fixed principles.

The culture of the plant is not free in France; formerly, only eight departments had the privilege, now it is extended to nineteen. Not only do they register the number of feet occupied by each plant in a field, but also the number of leaves on each. No hot-house plant can be more carefully tended; they are visited night and day to take away the caterpillars and snails. One by one, as they become ripe, the leaves are gathered and hung up in airy drying-rooms. No cultivator can use the seed he pleases; each year he receives from headquarters what is necessary, for experience has proved that certain kinds prosper in one soil that would perish in another. About eighteen months are required for a harvest to be gathered, dried, folded, and packed in bales, to be forwarded to one of the manufactories. Entering one of these, there can be no doubt as to what it is employed for, without seeing anything; the perfume envelopes and attaches itself to you, impregnates your clothes, and follows you long after you leave: as the door closes on you, you sneeze; the porter smiles, and recognises you for a novice. Following M. Du Camp as a guide, in his work on the subject, the process shall be described as carried on in Paris.

Entering the magazine, the different kinds are seen carefully separated: there are the bales which are grown in the country, the camel-hair sacks sent from the East, coarse hemp ones from the banks of the Danube, hogsheads from Virginia, and ox-hides full from Guatemala. These are all waiting until they may be required in the workshops,

for, excepting Havana cigars, all tobacco, to be agreeable, must be mixed in certain proportions, which have here been made the subject of deep study. The common rappée is composed of eight different kinds, which, by correcting, modifying, and developing each other, acquire the peculiar aroma that a connoisseur perceives at once. One of the workmen taking a pinch with great gusto remarked: ‘Ah! how many touches have been necessary to reach this result.’ Of this snuff we will first describe the process.

The bales are emptied; the leaves have been already tied together in bunches of twenty-five; these are shaken out with care, examined, and every leaf withdrawn which shews any mark of decay. This is most disagreeable work; it raises a cloud of dust, which gets into the throat and excites a constant cough; but as soon as they are arranged and spread, they are sprinkled with water containing ten parts in a hundred of marine salt. They remain for twenty-four hours under this humid influence, which gives them the suppleness of wet linen, and prevents their being broken when handled; the salt is added to avoid any fermentation, which would certainly arise from the contact of vegetable matter with water. The chopping-room comes next: the leaves are pushed through a cylinder towards a drum, armed with six oblique blades; it is worked by steam, and cuts the leaves into slices, a hundred and twenty times in a minute; its force is irresistible; and it is impossible to see the operations of the man who attends to it without feeling the danger he runs of having his arm cut off.

The tobacco is then brought down into a wooden apartment, where it is heaped together in stacks, for the purpose of fermentation, which is not long in shewing itself: thus the different kinds, penetrated by the emanations from each, acquire the essence of the whole. The heat increases each day, attaining to 75 and 80 degrees. As soon as any danger appears of spontaneous combustion, the masses are partially cut into, and the air admitted; but light, which is prejudicial, is carefully excluded by thick dark blinds. Here it remains for six months; the desired result cannot be obtained in a shorter time. By a slow operation, the tobacco loses a part of its poisonous nature, the nicotine; and the injurious acids are destroyed. The heaps are pulled apart with a pickaxe, and look like masses of earth; they are placed in sacks and carried to the top of the building, to be put into the mill.

Great improvements have been made in this part of the machinery: the workmen rebelled against them, refused the new engines, and were only brought to obedience by the law. Formerly, they were hand-mills much like the ordinary household coffee-mill: the working of them was very hard and painful, and it required many men and cost a very large sum: now four or five men can superintend the whole. There are twenty-six of these mortars in the same room. An Archimedean screw crushes, presses, and pulverises the leaves, after which they pass through a sieve, which rejects all the larger particles, to go through the process again. It is calculated that each fragment makes the passage through the mills ten times before it is permitted to go through the fine sieve. In this workshop, as well as in all those where the tobacco is in a powdered state, the men wear long linen

gaiters tied at the knee, which allow of their passing about without carrying away morsels that can be utilised. When pulverised, it might be supposed to be ready to put into boxes; but patience! the end has not yet arrived. It is now called dry rappée, and is fastened up in oak chests away from the light, where it remains for two months, when it is taken out and shovelled into a large square tub, where it receives another watering of salt and water. Again it is fastened up to undergo a second fermentation, which is hastened by putting in a little already fermented powder. The great chest is then hermetically sealed; a card is attached to it with the date of the fabrication, the watering, the kinds of which it is composed, and the day when it was closed. The temperature is raised to forty-five degrees, and in three months the powder is well mixed up, that the fermentation may be equal, and put into a fresh case. At the end of a year, it is ready for use, with that slightly ammoniacal savour which produces the irritation so much enjoyed by snuff-takers.

All the cases which bear the same date are at length brought up for inspection, and emptied. This is most painful work for the novices: the eyes pour down tears, the sneezing is continuous, and violent headache generally follows; yet they become accustomed to it more quickly than would be believed, and soon think nothing of it. The workmen, however, in this department acquire a pale grayish complexion; it is only a discoloration of the skin, and not an indication of weakness, for they shew their strength by lifting sacks of great weight. The contents of the different chests having been well mixed, a sample is sent to the laboratory, to decide whether it has the required strength and goodness: if the opinion is favourable, it is once more put through the sieve, and placed in casks, which are stamped down by a man's feet, like grapes in the vintage; and in two months it is ready for sale. So that, from the gathering to the completion, it will be seen that not less than three years and four months are required to make a pinch of snuff.

As for the cigars, they require even more attention as to the tobacco used; that grown on the most celebrated estates in Cuba is imported and stored in large cellars, darkened, and of constantly equal temperature. Not only are the bales wrapped in strong cloth, but within is a layer of palm-leaves, from which the bunches of tobacco are carefully removed, shaken out, and dipped in pure water. When they are sufficiently softened, old and skilful workwomen examine them, remove the stalks, and sort them according to their fineness, colour, and preservation. It is for them to decide what shall be placed in the interior or exterior of a cigar: silent, bending over their baskets, they study each leaf separately by smell, touch, and sight with the most minute attention. The chosen specimens having neither too harsh a texture nor too strongly developed veins, are rolled together by a machine, and preserved for the outside. Those for the inside present more difficulties. There is no doubt that the climate of Havana, at once warm and damp, has a direct influence on the tobacco, and communicates to it peculiar qualities. This it is attempted to imitate by placing that chosen for the inside in presses in a large room, where a jet of vapour gives the necessary moisture and heat. A lamp is required to see this room, as the light

of day is found to be injurious, that of the sun fatal. When this fermentation is ended, the leaves are passed on to the makers.

These are always women: each has before her a roll of leaves, the broken bits, a pot of glue, a knife, and a plate of zinc, in which is a hole the exact shape of the cigar to be made. The morsels are taken up, arranged so that they are perfectly even, and with the palm of her hand she rolls them in a leaf of second-rate goodness. One of those of the best quality is taken from the roll, cut into a strip, and, with much precaution, wrapped round and gummed lightly at the extremity, to prevent its being untwisted; the end is cut by an instrument, and the operation is ended. A clever workwoman, in her day of ten hours, can make from ninety to a hundred of the choicest kind; the commoner are done at the rate of three hundred. The women are well paid; but as the most rigorous silence is enforced, it cannot be supposed that they enjoy it. Indeed, it is a marvel that some hundreds of women can be together without talking, and when the clock marks the hour for rest, the animation becomes considerable.

The cigars, after being dried, are tested one by one as to their weight and size, and shut up in a drying-room for six months, to lose what little humidity they may have; if for a year, it is all the better for the public. When they come out, they are divided according to a certain mode of selection, tied into packets, placed in boxes, sealed, stamped, and sent to the place where they are to be sold. The best are put into boxes of cedar-wood, a steam saw being used to cut the odorous trunks from the Antilles and South America into thin boards. The perfume is said to have a good effect on the cigars. At one time, it was found impossible to procure as good cigars as the best sent from Havana; notwithstanding every precaution, the tobacco sent was not equal to the sample; fraud every day increased, and threatened to ruin the commerce. The director-general proposed that special persons should be established in Cuba to buy the best cigars that could be produced on the spot, and send them safely without adulteration, or undue use of the public money, which in this case would amount to thousands of pounds. The minister of state hesitated to grant such a request. 'What agents can you propose,' he said, 'who could be trusted with such large sums, and be proof against temptation?' The director replied: 'The engineers who leave the Polytechnic School.' The minister bowed: 'With them there is nothing to fear,' and signed the order. The necessary arrangements in Cuba were made, and the sale of cigars in the last ten years has increased to three times the amount. Above two million francs' worth are now sold in a year at the two special shops in Paris.

The cigars thus bought come exclusively from the *vegas* and *vuelta de abajo*, which are to tobacco what the estates of Johannisberg and Cloa-Vougeot are to grapes; they are sent direct to the manufactory to be tasted. During the passage, though they are packed in separate boxes, enclosed first in zinc and then in wood, some decay or deterioration generally takes place, and they are not in the superior condition which their price demands; the public would have some ground for complaint. The boxes containing the same kinds are emptied on to the table, and three of the most experienced

men examine each separately as to the exterior, and then take out twenty and smoke them. This work has to be done upon three hundred and fifty varieties, large and small, strong and weak, from the *damas*, of which you scarcely perceive the scent, to the *veneros*, which are so potent, every day, and without leaving the spot: such work might be enough to disgust the smoker for his whole life-time. These men arrive at such a delicacy of taste that they can not only distinguish the soil on which each is grown, the place of its fabrication, but also if the leaf has been gathered at the beginning or end of the harvest. This part of the labour, which is incomparably the most trying of all, is carried on in an immense room, where the open windows carry away clouds of smoke. The price is lowered of those cigars that are not first-rate; while the best are placed in cupboards around dark rooms, where they remain eighteen months or two years in an atmosphere as nearly like that of Cuba as can be.

Tobacco for smoking is the only kind left to be described, and as many of the processes are similar, it will not be necessary to dwell long upon it. After the softening of the leaves by water, they are placed in a machine not unlike a guillotine, which cuts them with the greatest precision; the blades are changed every twenty minutes, so soon do they lose their fine edge, and sent to be re-sharpened by steam. The fermentation, which gives the savour to snuff, would be ruinous to tobacco: it must be placed in a high temperature to kill all the seeds of it. A beautiful cylindrical machine, called a torrefactor, doing the work that used to require twenty men, is now employed; it seems as if it were endowed with intelligence, so well does it regulate the temperature of ninety-five degrees which is required. The cooling and cleansing from dust are accomplished by means of a ventilator in a turning cylinder, which does not allow of a moment's repose. All the essential operations are now ended; the tobacco, which looks very much like crisped hair, is collected in well-ventilated room, where it remains for six weeks. The larger pieces are picked out, with any morsels of iron, leather, or wood that may have got in by chance; it is weighed, and made up into sealed packets, which are stamped and dated, in order that amateurs who prefer the article fresh, may have the opportunity of procuring it.

Fashion has for a long time approved of the smoking of tobacco instead of the use of snuff, in which our forefathers loved to indulge, but official returns shew a great increase under the head of rolls for chewing. Is it owing to the infiltration of American manners that this is due? Any one who has seen a rope-maker at work with a winch, will understand how the rolls for this purpose are prepared. The leaves, previously moistened, are arranged on the turning-wheel, and when twisted, cut into lengths of a certain weight; to increase the flavour, and prevent too rapid drying, they are dipped in a trough filled with concentrated tobacco-juice. They are then pressed in packets, so as to give the proper shape, and express the superfluous fluid, after which they undergo a few days' drying, and are ready for sale.

The increase in the sale of all kinds of tobacco, shews how many ardent votaries it has; but there are also its declared adversaries, who wage war upon it. Many surgeons undertake from time to time a crusade against it; but there is a wide

gulf between that admission and the consequences which some predict from its use. Its abuse is pernicious in every sense. If a person smokes incessantly from long-used and too short clay pipes, he may be attacked with small cancers in the tongue; but this seems to be the only effect which science has established, though the Italian doctor, Pauli, asserts that the skull of smokers becomes black. Public attention has been directed since 1829 to nicotine, an organic alkali, composed of carbon, hydrogen, and azote; which is furnished by the leaves of tobacco, and is one of the most violent of poisons. It is certain that one of the stronger kind of cigars contains sufficient of this, which, if extracted and treated chemically, would kill a man; but the same may be said of a pound of almonds having prussic acid in them. It is one thing to swallow a pure body chemically isolated, and to absorb it when mixed with foreign matters which take from it all its mischievous properties. Half the nicotine in tobacco is extracted from it during its manufacture by washing, fermentation, and evaporation; and of the small quantity which remains it is needless to speak, as people use it so constantly and do not die of it.

Some medical writers have supposed that the increase of insanity was in proportion, and had relation, to the use of tobacco; but it would be more according to truth to set it down to the excessive drinking which prevails in England, Sweden, and Norway more especially; and also in France, since the Algerian army introduced absinth. That and alcohol are the true causes of the increase of mental maladies; in the former, which contains seventy-two degrees of alcohol, there is real poison, which burns and destroys the vital organs, and traces of exfoliation and depression have been clearly marked on the brain of drinkers of absinth, leading to maniacal madness, and softening of the mental organs. Tobacco, on the contrary, is a soothing narcotic, to which we become easily accustomed; the moderate use of which is without danger, and which helps to mitigate many of our troubles. To convince ourselves that the alarmists need not utter their anathemas as to its destruction of reason and health, it is only necessary to see what passes in the navy and the manufactories, where so much is daily consumed. It is ascertained without doubt that the quid is the form of tobacco in which the most nicotine is taken, since it is chewed, and thus enters into the digestive organs. Sailors are seldom without it in their mouths, as smoking is forbidden between decks and at many other times. It is not found that there is more than an ordinary proportion of insanity in the navy. As for the workmen in the manufactories, those who live from morning to night amidst its emanations, and are, so to speak, steeped in the fumes of nicotine, no special illness attacks them. In cases of epidemics they take their chance, but in these, and especially in cholera, they are found to be in some degree protected from contagion. Those who make the tobacco into rolls, and dip their hands into the concentrated juice, feel no evil from it. Sometimes the skin is slightly excoriated by the salts of potassium, but that is all. One man has been at the work for fifty years, and is eighty years of age; his hands are dyed black with the strong liquor, but he has never suffered from illness. There is only one affection noticeable; it is, that if a person whose hands are impregnated rubs

his eye, it becomes inflamed, and a slight ophthalmia follows for a day or two, easily yielding to the use of eye-water.

For the rest, there is a very simple way of neutralising the effect of tobacco, when too much has been taken, or when tried by a débutant: it is to drink a cup of strong coffee. The tannin which is contained in coffee is the antidote to nicotine. Those who are obliged to try the cigars, and smoke beyond all reason, when their taste is spoiled, take coffee, and recover immediately that sureness of appreciation which permits them to continue their work. In this the Turks are our teachers; they have discovered the means of smoking continually with pleasure, and without weariness, by drinking a cup of coffee after every pipe, the grounds of which serve to clean their long chibouques.

### A WOMAN'S VENGEANCE.

#### CHAPTER XVII.—TOO LATE.

It was still early when Arthur and Helen returned together from their interview in the summer-house, and they were both surprised to meet Mr Allardyce between it and the Hall. His habits were not early, nor had he been yet known to be down-stairs within half an hour of the sounding of the breakfast gong: as, however, he drank claret at that meal—for his tastes were continental—he did not suffer the penalties of lukewarm coffee and weak tea, which otherwise would undoubtedly have been inflicted on him by Mrs Tyndall. She did not like people to be late at meals, and especially young men, although she spoiled them in so many ways. She never kept her dinners waiting more than ten minutes, ‘to allow for the difference of the clock,’ for anybody. Not that she was wanting in courtesy, as some may thence suppose, but for precisely the opposite reason; she was not so discourteous as to spoil the dinner of half-a-dozen sensible persons for the sake of one or two fools who thought it fine to be late.

Mr Wynn Allardyce was no fool, nor did he think it fine to be late; but the comfort of no human being beside himself having ever entered into his mind, and being by nature slothful, he was seldom in time for anything. As for getting up in the morning, he saw no reason for doing so, except upon some festival of his church—such as the Derby day. Under the present unsatisfactory and imperfect conditions of life, it was quite unusual to get any Play before noon at earliest; and, like an artificial fountain, his only work was play, which was very literally meat, drink, and clothing to him, since it supplied him with the means of procuring them. And yet here was Mr Wynn Allardyce up and out of doors at eight o'clock in the morning, wondering, doubtless (like the fabled Rumtumfoozleum), at the works of Providence, which were all new to him at that hour. His delicate kid boots had rarely ‘brushed the dew away to meet the sun upon the upland lawn,’ when so far from its meridian as at present, and he found it absolutely necessary to mitigate the overpowering perfume of the flowers by cigarettes.

‘This is charming,’ he said, as he politely saluted the lovers; ‘this is charming of you, and as it should be. I have never even read in books of anything so touching as this walking out together

before breakfast-time. It reminds one of the Garden of Eden. Quite lackadaisical—I mean paradisiacal—upon my honour.’

‘It is very pleasant,’ said Helen coldly, ‘and nothing new to those who have been healthily brought up.’

The herb valerian had lost its flavour for her for the present: she didn’t like this banter, which somehow seemed to take the gloss off her newborn happiness.

‘You are right, Miss Somers, as you generally are. I’m a very unwholesome person, and all wrong every way. I have only just sufficient grace left to admire what is good in others. Have you seen our friend Adair this morning, either of you?’

His tone was careless, and in curious contradiction to the expression of his face, which was eager, and even anxious. His eyes wandered restlessly from one to the other so quickly, that they must needs have intercepted any glance of significance, had such passed between them.

‘No,’ said Arthur. ‘Jack is not such an early bird, though, unlike yourself, he is always in time for his groundsel. Have you backed yourself to beat him at getting up this morning?’

‘No; it’s not that; but I wish you to read this letter, in fairness to myself, before you see Adair.—Pray, forgive me for all this mystery, Miss Somers; there should be no secrets between Tyndall and yourself, I am aware, but this is a matter that no lady should be troubled with.’

‘There has been no quarrel among you gentlemen, I hope?’ exclaimed Helen nervously. ‘It struck me yesterday that there was a coolness between your Uncle Magus, Arthur, and Mr Paul Jones—’

‘There was such, I believe, Miss Somers,’ interposed Allardyce; ‘but I can answer for it, upon my honour, that it exists no longer, for the cause of quarrel has been removed.—You will grant me that little favour, Tyndall?’

‘To read this letter before I see Jack? Certainly, my good fellow, certainly.’

He put it in his breast-pocket; and Allardyce passed on, remarking, that since he was out at so premature an hour, he should take that constitutional before breakfast so strenuously advocated by writers on indigestion. His tone was so nervous and his laugh so forced, that Arthur and Helen both observed it.

‘There has been a row of some sort,’ said he to himself. ‘I hope Jack hasn’t insulted him. I won’t have any man insulted in my house upon mere suspicion. Allardyce is as straight as a die, or I should have found it out long ago.’

‘Mark my words,’ said Helen: ‘that note has some unpleasant reference to Mr Paul Jones. I never liked that man, Arthur.’

‘Well, he is not a lady’s man, my dear,’ laughed Tyndall, ‘it must be owned, and my notion is, now that I have given up play, that he will not trouble us much with his company; but there is no real harm in Paul, “my pretty Poll,” as Allardyce calls him; and, at all events, Lardy would be the last man to write anything against him.’

‘May I see the letter, Arthur?’

‘Well, no, my darling. I think that would be hardly fair to Allardyce, after what he said.’

‘He said there should be no secret between us.’

‘So he did, dear; he was obliged to say that,

you know ; but he added, that the matter in question was one that a lady should not be troubled with. I understand that to mean, that the subject is a private one—to be confined to himself and me. Don't you see, my darling ?

It was evident that 'my darling' did not see it. Her curiosity was not to be gratified ; and what was worse, the proprietary rights which she already imagined herself to possess in this young man—and which were as dear to her as the rights of property to a lord of the soil—were threatened. What could this matter be which was to be kept from her, yet shared with her Arthur by a mere acquaintance ? Could it possibly—a spasm shot across her heart—have reference to a woman ?

'As you please, Arthur,' said she coldly. 'Perhaps I had better go indoors, and leave you to examine this wonderful document by yourself.'

'Well, perhaps so, my darling. Lardy seemed to be in a deuce of a way about it, and it takes a good deal to put him out, so I suppose it's something important.'

'It ought to be, since it separates us'—

'For five minutes !' interrupted Arthur, laughing : 'not a moment more will I give to this fellow.'

She was gone, and had left him in an alcove cut in the box-tree wall, very convenient for privacy ; and yet he made no haste to open the letter, which was addressed to himself in Allardye's hand. It was the first time he had found himself alone since his lot in life had been settled for him ; it was only natural that his own affairs should take precedence in his thoughts, and they did so. A few hours ago, he had trodden that very walk in doubt and perplexity as to his future, in doubt even as to how he should exist ; and now it was arranged that he was to live on at Swansdale with Helen for his wife. Her generosity and devotion had conquered him, and he did not regret it even yet, even though her fair form was no longer close beside him with its eloquence of hand, and lip, and eye. She had been very good to him, very tender to his faults and follies, and the least he could do in return was to make her a good husband, faithful in thought as well as act, and wholly devoted to her interests. (That was not a very passionate way of putting it, perhaps ; but there had been good deal of passionate protestation that morning, and one's capacity in that way is limited.) It was a pity that dearest Helen was so soon put out, and when she was, that she shewed it so very plainly ; but that she was a thorough good girl, he felt certain, and would make a far better wife to him than he deserved. And in the meantime, thanks to her, what a load was lifted from his mind with respect to that debt of five thousand pounds that was owing to his friend Jones. This reminded him of the letter, the contents of which Helen had predicted would have some reference to that gentleman, and he broke the seal (for it bore the unusual safeguard of sealing-wax), and opened it. The envelope had no less than three inclosures—a note from Allardye, a statement in the handwriting of Jones, and a cheque for three hundred and eighty pounds from the former gentleman, payable to Arthur Tyndall. The note, which was dated 1 A.M. that morning, ran as follows :

MY DEAR TYNDALL—I have just discovered, to my inexpressible horror, that we have had a cheat

and card-sharper for our companion for the last week, and how long before that it is impossible to say. His villainy, it appears, was discovered by Adair last night, to whom he had grace enough to acknowledge that I myself was wholly ignorant of his malpractices. I compelled him, however, to sign his name to the inclosed statement ; not, I hope, that I need any such exculpation in your eyes, but for the satisfaction of those who have less knowledge of me. This scoundrel swears, as you will see, that he never used unfair means against you except under your own roof (and what an abyss of villainy such a confession reveals!) ; but it is quite impossible that I should retain a shilling of what I have ever chanced to win in his company. I therefore inclose you a cheque for the exact total which you have lost to me at cards from first to last. It is not much ; for it seems this fellow was too greedy to let much slip through his own fingers, even to avert suspicion from himself. I cannot paint the annoyance and disgust I feel at this astounding revelation ; for though I shall have the sympathy of every man of honour who is acquainted with the facts, I well know how my character will suffer at the hands of many a sneaking scoundrel, whose poisonous words may fall into ears that I would fain should hear no evil of me. When I think of it all, Tyndall, I almost wonder that the wretch who has so wronged you should have escaped with his life. That you, like myself, should have been made a cat's-paw of by such a vulgar ruffian must be humiliating enough ; but you will easily understand that in my case I feel this ten times more bitter, inasmuch as I have known him longer, trusted him more, and, above all, through that very intimacy have subjected myself to a suspicion of collusion that makes me sick to think of. I leave it, however, to your honour, honesty, and friendliness to do me full justice in this matter, and I am sure I do not trust to them in vain.—Always yours most faithfully,

WYNN ALLARDYE.

'The infernal rascal !' exclaimed Arthur, starting to his feet with the intention of running into the house.—'Hollo, Jack !—who should he run against on the terrace but Adair himself, who was out in search of him—'Where is this scoundrel ?'

'Allardye ?'

'No ; Jones, of course. Has he dared to stay under my roof ?'

'Not after last night, old fellow ; no—he's off. You know all about it, it seems ; I thought you would.'

'Yes, Allardye has written to me ; a most frank and manly letter, I must say.' They drew back into the alcove, where Adair read the communication in question, and Tyndall Mr Jones' statement, which he had been too impatient for revenge to do before. It told all that he knew respecting the marked cards, and also solemnly acquitted Allardye of all collusion in the matter.

'You see this quite acquits poor Lardy,' observed Arthur ; 'and though, of course, I shan't accept his check, I don't think he could have behaved better, or more straightforwardly, under the circumstances. It must be a devilish galling thing, poor fellow.'

'Very,' said Jack dryly : 'it must be deuced unpleasant to him to have to disgorge three hundred and eighty pounds, if he really supposes you

are going to accept it. But then, you see, you are not.'

' You know I don't mean *that*, Adair ; I wish you would not be so uncharitable. It is no wonder that Allardyce begged me to read his letter before I saw you.'

' Quite right,' said Jack cheerfully : ' he was reasonably afraid of my dropping what he calls "poisonous words" into your ear.'

' Well, my dear fellow,' answered Tyndall, ' I must beg you as a favour not to drop them. Perhaps I ought not to have let you read that letter : Allardyce has put himself and his honour in my hands, and I accept the trust. His quarrel is my quarrel so far.'

' My dear Tyndall, I am not going to quarrel ; but you must not expect my views to change quite so rapidly as yours. You must permit me to hold the same opinion that you yourself held up to, say twelve o'clock last night.'

' How do you mean ?'

' Well, "Allardyce is as straight as a die, and Jones is as straight as a die," said you ; *ergo*, Allardyce is about as straight as Jones. There, don't be angry ; but let us agree to differ. Time will shew. In the meanwhile, here is Money.' He took out of his pocket the 'I O U's' that Jones had given up, and also that gentleman's check for four thousand eight hundred pounds.

' What is this ?' cried Arthur, looking over them. He had suddenly grown deadly pale. His friend imagined that this arose from the shock of joy at finding himself relieved from his embarrassments, and even possessed of a small fortune.

' It is a trifle of seven thousand eight hundred pounds, my dear fellow ; but only your own money back, after all. Of course, this fellow had no claim to a sixpence of it ; but, nevertheless, let me tell you, it required some little finesse on my part to compel restitution. I'll tell you all about it at another time. But there goes the gong, and you had better be early at the breakfast-table, to prevent people chattering about this scandal : the flitting of our "pretty Poll" this morning is sure to be a matter of some speculation.'

' You are right,' said Arthur slowly, and moving mechanically towards the Hall. ' Let us go in.'

' Well, I must say you take your good luck more philosophically than you used to take your ill,' observed Jack, with some touch of irritation. ' I am not a commission agent, but I did expect a little percentage in the way of gratitude for having saved your three thousand pounds out of the fire, not to mention the collaring those "I O U"s".'

' My dear Jack, forgive me,' said Arthur, wringing the other's hand. ' I thank you from the bottom of my heart ; but —'

The completion of the sentence was a sigh ; and the next moment they came upon the ladies, who had collected on the croquet lawn, on to which the French windows of the breakfast-room opened. Had he ended with words, the sentence would perhaps have been : ' But this unlooked-for prosperity comes too late.'

#### CHAPTER XVIII.—UNDER THE SYCAMORE.

Six weeks have passed since the events recorded in our last chapter, and the haunted chalk-pit of Swansdale is compelled to echo the notes of a merry peal ; over wood and water, wedding news

is dancing, making many a rustic maiden's ear to tingle, and many a gossip's tongue to wag. There is feasting below stairs at the Hall to-day, and old Giles strolls about the lawn, for once an idle man, with his hands in his pockets, and a huge white favour on his breast. Uncle Magus (for the first time these twenty years) has left his rose-embowered cottage, and gone to London Town to give the young folks his blessing at the altar, when the priest has done with them ; and the priest is Mr Glyndon.

' A nice day the young squire have got,' says old Jacob Renn to his daughter, as they sit at their afternoon meal, with the cottage door open, through which the music of the bells breaks in pell-mell. ' If happy's the bride on whom the sun shines, Miss Helen—she's been missus, however, these three hours, I reckon—ought to be most uncommon happy.'

' I trust she may be,' says Jenny steadily, not looking at her father, but gazing out at the blue air, as if the bells were hung in the heavens, and she was watching the spirits who rang them.

' What's the use of trusting, lass ? Let's drink her health and his. There's a glass of sherry wine for you such as was never drunk in a lock-keeper's cottage before, I'll answer for it, and seldom in a gentleman's house. It comes from the best bin in the old *Welcome*. Here's to the young couple : "Long may they live, and happy may they be, blessed with a good large familee," as the saying is. Why don't you drink, lass ?'

' I did drink, father.'

' You don't call that a drink ! No wonder they names you Jenny Wren, for 'twas more like the sip of a bird. When you've wine like this, you should hold it up to the light, so—that pleases the eye ; then lean your head back, and tilt the glass gently, so—that pleases the palate ; then think over what you have done a bit, for you've been a-swallowing gold, or leastways a good two shillings' worth of the best amontillado, which is the mother of sherry.'

' It's very nice, father, I've no doubt ; but I am afraid it's thrown away upon me. The heat oppresses me. Would you mind my leaving you for a few minutes to sit by the lasher in the cool ?'

' Not I, lass, since you leave me in such good company.'

Jenny rose and went out through the garden, stopping on her way to pluck a rose. If this was to shew herself calm and unagitated in mind, the action was lost upon the old man, for he was looking at her unemptied glass.

' What fools women are !' was his reflection. ' The idea of leaving wine like that ! But Jenny always threw away her chances. It is my belief she might ha' been a peeress by this time, if she had cared to play the cards that were dealt to her. She might certainly have had Mr Arthur—not that he was much of a catch, as it has turned out ; and now she has only to hold up her finger, and the rector would put the ring on. A lord, a squire, a rector : well, that's pretty well for one young woman, and she but an innkeeper's daughter. But what sort of an innkeeper ? Ah, there's the rub. Well, it's not for me to boast ; but I don't suppose there ever was such a landlord of an inn before or since. Certainly not since, to judge by that fellow who has got the old place now. No manners, no graces, no keeping of himself up before

everybody—such as I had the gift for. Why, I've seen a matter of six young lords a-dining at the old house at once, and every one on 'em had a "Well, Jacob, how *are* you?" for me, when I brought in the first dish. Jenny had that gift too. No princess could have held her own better, or taught them their place. Still, as a father, I felt the inn was bad for her, with its rough river-folk, and queer comers and goers; and so, when a good offer came, I parted with it. It is not every father that would have done that.'

It might have occurred to Mr Jacob Renn that the same objections that he thus urged against the *Welcome*, as a residence for his princess, were at least equally strong against the lock cottage; but amontillado is not only the 'mother of sherry,' but when taken freely, as in the present case, of self-satisfaction and complacency.

'Yes, I have done my duty, I flatter myself, in that station of life to which Providence has called me, and especially as a father. I have never inferred—interfered with that girl, but just let her take her own way, and a queer way it is. Why, notwithstanding all her good looks—and when a girl has *them*, she generally don't care to have anything else—she's a cleverer than the member for the county; and as for study, the parson himself daren't tackle her in *theol*—theology. I wonder, by-the-bye, if she could explain what hiccup was sent for? It can't be of any *use*, that's certain, for it only spills the wine, and I don't believe as anybody thinks it a but—a beauty. I've got eight shillings-worth of amontillado in my inside, and should be perfectly happy if it wasn't for him, if it wasn't for him—'

"Hic, Hoc, Hoe;  
Lay him on the block."

That's what the young lord from Eton used to sing to Jenny, a song full of the Latin he had learned at school; but she would only laugh at him. "Lords shouldn't be laughed at," said I; "it's disrespectful, and contrary to the Cat-Cat—'To behave myself reverently to all my betters,' says the Church Catechism;" and old Jacob Renn was allus a churchman. Hark at them bells! One more glass, one more glass, *one* more glass: that's what they're a-saying on; and I obeys 'em.'

Jacob Renn obeyed them so loyally, that he enriched his interior by exactly twenty shillings' worth of the 'mother of sherry'—drained the last dregs, in fact, including the contents of his daughter's glass, and then fell fast asleep in his chair.

In the meantime, Jenny was seated beneath the sycamore behind the cottage, and hidden from all save those whom pleasure or business might chance to bring to the lasher which thundered at her side, a dam with a low flood-gate alone interposing between herself and it. But her ear heard nothing but the bells, which, instead of inviting her to take one more glass of the amontillado, importunately reminded her of the auspicious occasion which they celebrated. 'Arthur Tyndall's married,' 'Arthur Tyndall's married,' 'Arthur Tyndall's married,' was their reiterated tidings, and every word of it seemed to beat itself into her brain.

"Now that he is married," murmured she, "I must return him this. Why did I not give it him before?"

She took a little anchor of gold from her bosom,

in whose white depths it was wont to lie hidden, and contemplated it with sorrowful eyes.

"Perhaps it was my keeping *that* which made him look and speak so when I met him on the bridge. Well, he shall have it back now. Yes, my one jewel, my sole treasure for so many years, you must go! There are the letters, too, which he wrote me from college, that I have kissed and wept over so often: must he have those also? May he not conclude I have lost or burned them? No; he cannot. He forgot *me*, but he cannot think that I ever forgot him. Burned? Lost? No; he will know better than that. They must go back. I will give them him without a word, when I see him next."

Here she hurriedly thrust the trinket back whence it came, and started to her feet.

"What?" exclaimed a voice of astonishment; 'Alice Renn, and without a book in her hand!'

It was Mr Glyndon who addressed her; and notwithstanding that he was an efficient member of the village choral society, his tone was unusually musical as he did so. It was always gentle when he spoke to the lock-keeper's daughter, but also somewhat sad. It was gentle now, even to tenderness; but there was a buoyancy in the tone (or so it seemed to Jenny) which she had never noticed before, and it jarred upon her ear.

"I was looking at the book of Nature, Mr Glyndon, which has more to tell us than you quite give it credit for."

By comparison with the ordinary British maiden, Jenny was rather an *esprit fort*. The rector and she had had many a good-natured assault of arms together upon theological matters; he attired in full armour of orthodoxy, and riding on the high horse of ecclesiastical supremacy; and she, as it were, clothed but in buff jerkin of common-sense, and armed with the bow of sense of justice, and the shafts of native humour. When he came thundering down upon her with the lance of authority, she would step lightly aside, and sometimes send an arrow through the joints of his harness, that went home. To do him justice, he had been always ready for the combat—perhaps it was the best chance he had of getting her to talk with him alone—while she did but stand on her defence; but on the present occasion, their respective tactics seemed reversed: she had offered him battle by throwing down that gage of the book of Nature, and yet he did not pick it up.

"This scene is a fair leaf of it, indeed," said he; "and yet, how the place is marred by those who haunt it!"

"Thank you, sir." This acknowledgment was accompanied by an elaborate courtesy.

"My dear Miss Alice, you surely cannot think that I was referring to yourself?"

"I didn't know," answered she demurely. "When I have heard you say: 'There all was peace and beauty,' &c. it has been generally followed by a reference to the presence of the infidel."

"Don't talk so lightly, Alice. I should be distressed and pained, indeed, did I think *you* were deserving of such a name. What I had in my mind was the unfortunate association of this place—the set of people whose business necessarily brings them hither, with their brutal manners, and still more shocking language."

"Do you mean the boating gentlemen, or the barges?"

The simplicity of the tone of this inquiry would have made the fortune of a comic actress. Jenny knew well enough that Mr Glyndon meant the bargees, but also that he was very jealous of the gentlemen rowers, whose toast she was, in spite of herself, though they were seldom vouchsafed a sight of her; and indeed the very mention of them irritated him.

'The bargees, of course,' said he. 'It makes me shudder to think of your being obliged to listen to them.'

'One is obliged to listen to many things, Mr Glyndon, to which one would willingly shut one's ears,' answered she significantly. 'But as for their bad language—which my friend the lasher here, however, is so good as to drown—that is not half so bad, to my mind, as seeing them beat their horses. When a man blasphemeth his Creator, he does not do it with impunity, I suppose, and the Maker of all things is far beyond the reach of his ill-humours; but the poor horse is not. For my part, I have a firm belief that words—for ill as well as for good—have not the weight of deeds.'

'It is the intention, however, my good girl, that makes the sin,' observed the rector, mounting his ecclesiastical steed, in spite of his determination not to do so. 'If it were a man's intention to ill-treat his horse, even though something should occur to prevent him, he would be as culpable as if he had done it.'

'It would not be so bad for the horse, however,' observed Jenny slyly. 'Now, suppose (for one may suppose anything) the bargee intended to go to church, and then thought better of it (I beg pardon—worse of it), would it be equally creditable to him as though he had actually gone?'

'My good girl, you know better than that. Everybody knows that "hell is paved with good intentions."

'Who told you that? Is it in the Bible? If not, why are you clergymen so fond of quoting it? You seem to me to take a positive pleasure—I mean many of you do so—in narrowing the way, and closing the gate against miserable sinners. If a bad intention unfulfilled is as bad as a bad act, a good intention unfulfilled ought to be worth something, surely.'

The rector moved uneasily on his theological steed. This shaft had found its way, if not to some vital portion of his frame, to a more or less tender one. Before he could seat himself in the saddle again to his complete satisfaction, Jenny let fly another arrow.

'You are good people, you clergymen—much better than most of us, I grant—but you are not ingenuous. You will concede nothing to your adversaries; you don't know how to give up with a good grace a position that has been shewn to be untenable. Why don't you own at once that sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander?'

'Because it isn't,' rejoined the rector sharply. 'Take that very proverb, for instance, in its literal sense: "What is right for the woman is right for the man." That is not the case.'

'But it ought to be, Mr Glyndon.'

'You know you cannot maintain *that* position, my good girl. Men and women are *not* equal; they were not made so from the first. Nature herself would teach us that, even if we had not the scriptures. Read the earliest record of human life that we possess—the Old Testament'—

'Yes; I know very well that women are only spoken of there as gleaners or pitcher-carriers. But it was only men who wrote that account of them.'

'Inspired men, however,' said the rector gravely. 'It is a pity,' answered Jenny with irritation, 'that there were no inspired women.'

The thought of Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, passed across the rector's mind, but he dismissed it, as being scarcely apposite to the argument.

'You are fighting against nature and religion together,' said he. 'The world accepts the inequality of the sexes as decisively as the church; I have been reading Her words this very day upon that subject.'

This was the first reference that had been made by either Jenny or the rector to the ceremony which he had performed that morning in town; and yet it had been filling—though with very different feelings—the thoughts of both of them. Not even when Arthur had come down to Swansdale an engaged man, did the rector feel sure that something might not happen to break off the match. It might have been possible for a man (though he would not himself have thought so) to forget Alice Renn during long years of absence; but even one who had so forgotten her could scarce be proof against her surpassing charms when his eyes once more beheld them. Although, therefore, the rector could not but blame Arthur's conduct with respect to Jenny, it did not seem to him, in the face of such great temptation, wholly inexcusable. He knew that she loved her old flame still, and that while he was attainable—was within the possibility of becoming hers—there had been no hope for himself in that quarter; but now—now that his friend had given her up once for all, and married another woman—there would surely be more chance for *him*—the great reward for his long and patient waiting would fall into his loving arms at last. For he had loved Jenny from the first, even though he knew there had been some tender passages between Tyndall and herself, and had hoped in his secret heart for the very thing that had actually come to pass—namely, that absence would cool the passion of one or the other of them. And even when he heard that it had done so in Arthur's case, though chivalry towards his friend no longer kept him silent, as it had hitherto done, he had kept silence still. For though suspense is hard to bear, it is not, after all, so hard as that rough shock of disappointment and refusal which he had only too good reason to fear would be his fate if he asked Jenny for her love while Arthur was unmarried. 'The fair field' was at last his own, but (alas!), as it seemed, 'no favour.' Rather than even now hear him speak upon the subject next his heart, she met him with arguments and contradictions which seemed more woful, because more out of place than ever. He would fain have agreed with her upon every topic, had his conscience permitted him to do so, and through sweet accord, have led her tenderly to the consideration of his suit.

Of course, there were circumstances in Jenny's case which caused her to hold a different position towards himself than might have been expected, considering their relations in life. He was the rector of the parish, and so far a man of some importance and dignity, while she was but a lock-keeper's daughter;

but this disparity was apparent rather than real, for old Jacob Renn was reported to be rich, and had been known in Swansdale as a man of substance for near half a century, while Jenny's independence did not consist in means alone, but in character. She had helped the rector with his schools and choir, and did so even yet; but out of the school-room and the church she held her own opinions, and expressed them with freedom. He had set himself to convert this beautiful heretic, but not at present with any decisive success. Their ages were about the same; and if he were her superior in learning, she, on the other hand, was gifted with better wits, and even with an originality of mind most unusual with one of her sex and position; and now he felt himself less able than ever to contend with her, with that traitor in his own camp, his heart, urging him to dismount from his ecclesiastical steed, and fling away shield and spear, and throw himself on his knees at her dainty feet. He was a kindly Christian gentleman, bent on doing good—though somewhat obstinate in doing it after a particular fashion—singularly free from taint of grossness, and with an honest contempt for the airs and ways of gallantry; but at this moment he would perhaps have bartered some of his solid virtues for the possession of handsome features, a graceful form, and the art of expressing fitly the tender feelings within him. He knew that his face was plain, his shape ungainly, his manners stiff and formal, and, in his humility, thought such drawbacks to be even greater defects in woman's eyes than they really are.

Even when he had got to speak of the ceremony that he had solemnised that morning, he lacked the address to turn the opportunity to his own account; nay, on the contrary, its approximation to the matter he would have spoken of so terrified him, that in place of pursuing the subject, he flew off at a tangent. 'If you want to see the place of women in society accurately defined, Miss Alice,' said he, 'you should read Dr Straitlace on *The Handmaiden of the Church*.'

'Perhaps I may,' said Jenny; 'but I remember Miss Blanche telling me that Dr Straitlace was almost a papist.'

'He is a most wise and excellent man, my good girl,' returned Mr Glyndon hotly, for he was himself accused of leanings towards the scarlet woman, 'whatever foolish people may choose to say of him.'

Now, Jenny detested to be 'my-good-girled' by the rector or anybody else, justly conceiving that that form of words implied intellectual patronage and condescension, and she did not like her friend Miss Blanche to be called foolish. 'Well, I'll read it,' said she humbly, 'since you think so highly of him, Mr Glyndon. He was the same gentleman, if I remember right, who distinguished himself so highly at Oxford by advocating the Celibacy of the Clergy.' Jenny was very miserable on her own account, which must be her excuse for a retort so cruel, and directly she had spoken she would have given much to have recalled her words. She had undoubtedly intended them to bear a certain significance. On his first coming into the parish, as a very young man, enamoured of Puseyism, but ignorant of Jenny, Mr Glyndon had himself advocated the celibacy of the clergy as well as all other points of the High-church charter; but she was well aware that the extreme solicitude

exhibited by this excellent theologian for her conversion to his ritualistic views had been of late years mingled with a more tender feeling, the idea of which was to-day, of all days, especially unwelcome to her. She wished, once for all, to cure him of his wound, but had she known how deep and tender it was, she would not have used such ungentle surgery. Just as though this blow had been a mortal one, dealt in his face, the colour rose upon the rector's high cheek-bones, and his honest eyes grew moist with tears.

'You are angry with me, Alice,' said he in a plaintive voice. 'Forgive me, if I have annoyed you.'

'I am angry with myself, Mr Glyndon, for being angry on such small occasion,' answered Jenny earnestly, and I should say rather, 'Forgive me.'

'You would have me forget you,' he blurted out, with sorrowful pathos. 'Yes; you would say: "Forgive, and then Forget." I read it in your eyes.'

She did not answer him, for she could say nothing that could please or comfort him; but she pitied him from her soul. Her silence and her pity gave him courage at last to ask what his heart nevertheless foreboded would be denied.

'Dear Alice, I have loved you for many a year,' sighed he, 'when you have never dreamed of it; but now I see you know it. Take pity upon me.—You do so? Well, and pity is akin to love, they say.'

She shook her head, but suffered him to retain the hand he had seized, though it lay in his own without response.

'I know, Alice, you have not the love to give that you once gave to another—he could feel that little hand growing cold and heavy in his hold as lead, yet he went on—but I am content with less, far less. Even if you do not love me at all, I can wait in hope. In time, perhaps—now you know how I hope and pray for it—you may learn to do so—just a little.'

'I respect and like you very, very much, Mr Glyndon,' said she gravely; 'but you ask me for what I have not to give. You cannot raise the dead, and my love is dead, and—Listen! that is its knell!'

The merry marriage-peal was still filling the trembling air above them, and for a full minute they both listened to it, while it wailed out, 'My love is dead,' 'My love is dead,' 'My love is dead,' before either spoke again.

Then, 'I know that well,' said the rector softly; 'it was cruel of me to speak to you like this upon the very day it died: a week hence, a month, a year, I will ask you once again, Alice, and even then I will not expect too much.'

'Mr Glyndon, it is no use,' said Jenny, 'nor will it ever be. It may be different with other girls—and better girls than I—but as for me, I can love but once.'

'But you cannot love Arthur Tyndall *now*, reasoned the poor rector, 'for that would be sinful.'

'Can I not?' she answered with a strange, sad smile. 'You talk of love, sir, but you know not what it is. There is, however, no need to argue upon that matter, since one thing is certain—if I may not love him, I *cannot* love another. What! are you still not answered? Well, then, years ago I made a vow—Heaven was my witness, though you are the first man to know it—that I would

never marry any but Arthur. You would not have me forswear myself, I know.'

So she thought, and so would he have thought, an hour ago ; but the good rector was, after all, but human. As the existence of buried Herculaneum was not dreamed of for centuries, and would never have been discovered but for the sinking of a well, so there is many a man who goes through life without any necessity arising for the revelation of his inmost feelings. The lava-mud of conventionalism is sometimes very deep and hard, but under it all lies human nature. Ritualism—like many another ‘ism’ and ‘opathy’—is excellent and all-sufficient when there is nothing much the matter ; but, like thin ice with a weight too great for it, it breaks down when the pressure is serious. The rector found himself face to face, for the first time, not only with the declared object of his affections, but with *himself*, and if he had had time to contemplate his own features thus disclosed, he would scarcely have recognised them.

‘Such a vow as you speak of, dearest Alice, is nought,’ cried he impetuously ; ‘or if it be aught, it is better broken. What right had you to devote your whole life and being to any human creature, as though he were something sacred, in place of the faithless man that his conduct has proved him to be ? Why is he, because he has played *you* false, to make *my* life also miserable and lonesome ? Do you suppose, because I do my duty in the station to which I have been called, and am not at the bidding of every reckless impulse, that I cannot love—that, like the blessed martyrs of old, I walk about in the burning fiery furnace of passion unconsumed ? I tell you, no ! I love you, I adore you, I worship you, as much, nay, Heaven forgive me ! more than man should worship woman !’

He would have thrown himself on his knees before her, as if to a veritable patron saint, had she not stopped him.

‘Do not abase yourself, Mr Glyndon ; do not do what you will be ashamed to think of in your calmer moments,’ cried she with tender earnestness. ‘I pity you ; I respect you ; I am sorry, beyond the power of words to tell, to pain you thus ; but it is better for you to know the truth, however bitter, than to encourage a baseless hope. I will never marry you, nor any man.’

#### ASHORE ON THE CAPE VERD ISLANDS.

SUNRISE on a fine April morning, with a fresh breeze astern ; to see dancing and sparkling in the sunshine ; to starboard, the little white houses of Santa Cruz clustering along the curving shore, and the bare white scalp of the Peak of Teneriffe rising gauntly against the lustrous sky ; to port, the long dark-gray band that marks the presence of the Isle of Gran Canaria ; and over all, the great sun in his cloudless glory, not yet marred by the destroying heat of noon—like the early reign of Nero before it degenerated into cruelty.

‘There’s good-bye to Teneriffe,’ says a veteran ‘proprietaire,’ on his way to La Plata. ‘The next land we sight will be St Vincent, in the Cape Verds, and you can go ashore *there*, if you like !’

‘And what kind of place is St Vincent ?’ ask I, struck by the ironical emphasis of the last words.

‘A regular Pandemonium on earth, without comfort, without society, without vegetation :

nothing in it but a lot of sharks and niggers, under the special protection of Old Nick.’

‘Oh ! come !’ remark I inwardly ; ‘we can’t accept *that* verdict without demur. Let us consult other authorities ;’ and I move across the deck to the ship’s doctor, who is seated beside the wheel.

‘What kind of place is St Vincent, doctor ?’

‘A beastly hole,’ answers the good physician with Spartan force and brevity.

Turning away in despair, I run against the captain.

‘What kind of place is St Vincent, captain ?’

‘Good place for fruit—not much to be seen there,’ replies the laconic skipper, passing on.

‘Come, that’s a *little* better,’ muse I. ‘Here comes Professor Rewland Compasse.—What kind of place is St Vincent, professor ?’

‘A vast volcanic cinder, wholly devoid of vegetation,’ replies the savant, with calm severity.

While I am attempting to reconcile this unpromising verdict with the captain’s statement, up comes the Hon. Augustus Plantagenet Fitzlavender Kydde, ostentatiously pulling four moderately long hairs which he has just discovered on his upper lip.

‘What kind of place is St Vincent ? I don’t mean from a political point of view, mind, but simply considered as a place to go ashore in.’

‘Well, it’s rather a picturesque spot,’ answers the attaché, in a voice like that of a tired canary ; ‘but there’s no getting a good cigar there at any price.’

‘Quot homines, tot sententiae.’ I go forward in despair, and stumble upon my old friend the boatswain.

‘What kind of place is St Vincent, boatswain ?’

‘Well, sir,’ answers the ancient mariner with a grim smile on his iron features, ‘it’s just this sort o’ place—that when you first sees it, you’ll be all agog to go ashore ; and afore you’ve been there ‘arf an hour, you’ll be ten times all agog-er to come aboard again.’

Early next morning we reach the much disputed locality—vast crumbling cinder shooting up into scores of sharp, jagged, dark-gray peaks, hundreds of feet in height, one of which, as we approach, assumes, with marvellous fidelity, the likeness of a slumbering Washington. There are the hero’s large, bold features, grand in their stern repose ; the frill of his ruffled shirt, and the broad expanse of his mighty chest ; the arms folded across his bosom, and the outline of the huge frame outstretched far away beyond, around which the rolling clouds curl and wreath like the smoke of a battle. Below, time and tide have scooped in the huge corpse of the dead volcano a charming little bay, upon the smooth, sandy shore of which, like chickens nesting round the mother-hen, some fifty or sixty little white cottages cluster around a tiny church, under the title of the town of St Vincent. Beyond, lies the blue sparkling sea, flanked by great bastions of cliff, which cast a grim shadow over it in the glory of the early sunrise ; while here and there, through the cool, transparent water, stand gauntly up the black, jagged fangs of the ‘Devil’s Rocks,’ like the teeth of antediluvian giants ranged round some primeval dentistry.

The echoes of our signal-gun have hardly ceased rolling among the rocks, when we are boarded by the ‘health-officer,’ a shrivelled old Mephistopheles, very much like a dried haddock, wearing

a straw-hat without a brim, and attended by a brace of negro soldiers, who are armed with swords about the size of butter-knives, and squeezed into uniforms so outrageously tight, that they are forced to keep their mouths open for fear of suffocation. While I am still wondering at these caricatures of humanity, a tap on the shoulder makes me turn round, and I find myself face to face with my chosen companion, the Rev. Secundus St Paul—a brother gownsman, now on his way to the interior of Brazil.

'Do you think it will do me any harm to go ashore?' he asks hesitatingly. 'You know I'm ordered to be careful. But I think, just for once, I might risk it; I should like it so much.'

'It'll do you all the good in the world, my dear fellow,' respond I; 'all you want is more exercise and more oxygen. Just you go ashore at every place we come to, and by the time we get in, you'll be in as hard training as an African missionary.'

The parson smiles faintly. 'Well, then, I'll go and get ready, and take the sergeant along with me; the poor fellow will be too only glad to go.'

'The sergeant' is my friend's servant and henchman *pro tem.*, who has been successively a sailor in the German Ocean, a soldier in the Crimea, a non-commissioned officer in China, and a guard on the Great Northern. From washing a shirt to serving a battery, there is nothing he cannot do at a moment's notice; and when he appears on deck in his shore-going clothes, the gleam of pleasure on his firm, bronzed, soldierly face is a treat to see.

'Taint so much for myself as I'm glad, sir,' he says; 'but that poor gen'lman o' mine do need some shakin' up, he do. It ain't in natur' as a man should feel ship-shape, sittin' humped over a lot o' books all day; but we'll give him a breather *this* time, please God.'

The boatmen cluster about us like bees as soon as we appear on the gangway, and we are just about to embark, when Fitzlavender Kydde (who has not left Eton so long as to have lost his school-boy relish for a 'lark') steps forward with a petition to be allowed to join our party.

'I want to have a spur up one of those jolly old hills yonder,' says the unledged diplomat, with the faintest tinge of excitement shewing itself, for the first time, through his *poco-curante* manner. 'We can have a race for first up; it'll be rather fun!'

We commit ourselves to a brace of lean, garlic-scented, olive-complexioned tatterdemalions, with half a shirt and one pair of trousers between them; and ten minutes later, our party lands on Cape Verd soil, what little of it there is. It takes us about a quarter of an hour to satisfy ourselves that there is nothing to be seen in the 'town,' if it will allow me to call it so; but having peeped into the quaint little church, tested our newly acquired learning by attempting to translate the Portuguese inscription upon the little painted tea-caddy which serves as a town-hall, and laid in a good supply of indigestion in the shape of numberless oranges and bananas, at twenty-five for sixpence, we are open to a fresh offer. At this point, our attention is attracted by a low white wall, cropping up from the vast gray slope of the overhanging ridge, which, on a nearer view, proves to be the inclosure of the town cemetery, a trim

little place, kept in better order than might have been expected. But to us, at least, the interest of the scene concentrates itself upon the few scattered mounds that lie outside the wall. Even upon this remote corner of the earth, the war of creed with creed has descended like a blight; the Catholic and the heretic may not sleep their last sleep together; and the few Protestants who have laid their bones in this lonely spot, lie, like Pariahs, without the boundary, not to pollute the holy ground with their presence. Two English sailors of sixteen and nineteen, whose low headstones contain little but their names, and the brief, touching epitaph: 'Regretted by their shipmates'; one or two nameless mounds of turf, already half destroyed; and a small white tablet, which tells its own story: 'Sacred to the memory of Alexander W—, who died on the 3d April 1855, in the 2d year of his age; and of William W—, his brother, who died on the 1st July 1855, aged six months.' Simple words enough, but what a depth of untold sorrow do they convey! Two children (all, it may be, that their parents possessed) cut off within three months of each other, and nothing left to the survivors but a weary journey back to their desolate home, far away from the little grave on this black, lonely rock in the land of the stranger. We look at each other in silence, and pass on to the five simple German crosses that stand next in order, each inscribed with the '*Hier ruht in Gott*' that now flecks every acre of Northern France, and the half-effaced words of some grand old Lutheran hymn. Just beyond these stand three other crosses of a different pattern—flanked by huge side-pieces that give them the form of a gigantic A—which greet me like the face of an old friend; the same which I have seen, many a time and oft, planted like little islets amid the bleak moorlands of the Volga, and the dreary wastes of the Don. Thousands of miles hence, in some quiet German valley, or some log-built Russian hamlet, the names of those who lie here beneath the burning tropical sky are still lovingly remembered; and not without a certain pathos does the old Crimean soldier mutter to me, with a strange softening on his iron face: 'Poor fellows! man has cast 'em out, but mayhap God will take 'em in!'

But in such a scene, and on such a morning, no gloomy impression can be other than evanescent. At sight of the steep crumbling slope before us, and the bold rocky bluff that rises beyond, the boisterous Anglo-Saxon spirit breaks loose; and well for us that Mr Wilkie Collins is not here to indulge in one of his favourite homilies upon 'the untamable barbarism of the English athlete.' The languid Fitzlavender tosses his wideawake in the air with a wild hurrah; the sedate sergeant claps his hands with a 'Who'll be first up?' and the next moment all four of us are racing like demoniacs up the broken ridge, kicking down big stones at every step, with a disregard of our own and each other's lives worthy of Volunteer riflemen. For the next twenty minutes, we are leaping gullies, racing down steep slopes, scrambling over heaps of crumbling stone, falling down and getting up again, without the faintest idea of going anywhere in particular, but simply in order to make as much noise, and get through as much violent exercise as possible. And, hottest and keenest of us all—laughing at his bleeding hands,

springing up defiantly from tumble after tumble, manfully choking down the deep gasps that shake him at every stride—who but the dainty Fitz-lavender, who lounged all day on a sofa, and would not venture into the sun lest it should spoil his complexion !

At length, having thoroughly exhausted ourselves—bruised and scratched from head to foot, grimed with dust, and reeking with perspiration—we come to a halt, and eye each other furtively, as if beginning to feel somewhat ashamed of our late antics. The parson, however, faces the situation like a man.

'I suppose we have seen all that there is to see,' he remarks, as coolly as if we had been busied with the gravest antiquarian researches ever since our landing; 'and it has certainly been very interesting on the whole.'

'Mayhap,' answers the sergeant, ruefully surveying the astounding disorder of his dress and person; 'but it seems to me as the greatest sight on the island just at present's our four selves !'

I need not burden my readers with the details of our further adventures—how we went coral-hunting in defiance of sharks, and obtained a rich booty—how we stumbled upon a family of five sea-urchins wedged in the cleft of a rock, and succeeded in digging one of them out—how we slid down slippery rocks, and waded through shallow lagoons—till the boom of the signal-gun warned us to be off. But on returning to the steamer, we found all faces blanked by a strange solemnity, like the shadow of some great disaster.

'What is the matter ?'

'The yellow fever has broken out at Per-nambuco !'

And six days later, we were face to face with it.

#### A SHIPWRECK.

STEADILY blows the north-east wind,

And the harbour flag blows straight from the mast;

And the sailors lounge and look on the pier,

And smoke their pipes, and think it will last.

Yonder the cloud-rack lowers and glooms,

And the sweet blue sky is hidden away ;

Whilst the muttering waves grow hoarse and loud,

And you have to shout the thing that you say.

The distant fleet of white-sailed ships

Come hastening landward with wet black sides,

As they lean to the push of the gusty wind,

Now a rush, now a pause, on the weltering tides.

The spumy froth of the rock-veded waves

Gathers in creaming yeast on the sand ;

Then away in fluttering flocks it speeds

For hedges and hillsides far inland.

The sea-birds dip and wheel in the air,

And search the surges with greedy eyes ;

They hang with tremulous wings on the brink,

Then away on the blast with their shrill sad cries.

Yonder the people crowd to the cliff,

Where the long gray grass is flattened and bent ;

As the stress of the hurricane passes by,

Every eye to seaward is fixed intent.

Far down below are the cruel rocks,

All black and slippery with black sea-weed ;  
And pits profound, where the whirlpools run,

For ever revolving with hideous speed.

How the ships come ! Let them come, poor barks !

Hero is the harbour quiet and still ;

Once entered, the weary crew can sleep,

And dream of their home without fear of ill.

How the ships come ! What's that ? A helm

Is carried away, and she drifts to the blast ;

Over her deck sweeps a roaring wave,

And up in the rigging the crew run fast.

On she comes for the rocks ! O men !

O maids and mothers ! O daughters and wives !

You are sitting at home by the hearth-fire warm,

And the sea has a hold of your loved ones' lives !

Now she strikes on the rocks ! No aid

Can reach her there ; she must tumble and roll,  
Till at last a great third wave will come,

And eat her up, and engulf the whole.

There—they are lashing themselves to the spars !

Shrill on the wind comes their bitter cry ;

They are waving their hands ! Out of the main

A billow rises, and breaks, and goes by.

All is vanished ; the ship and the men,

Crumbled, and crushed, and hurried away !

Here are the splinters on every rock,

All o'er the beach, and all round the bay.

There, on the sands, is a sailor's cap ;

And there close by a man on his face ;

And there are the others ! Oh, cover them quick,

And carry them off from this fatal place !

They are laid in the yard of the weather-worn church,

And the grass will grow on their quiet grave ;

But, O Lord in heaven, hadst Thou spoke one word,

It had stilled the wind, and curbed the wave !

But perhaps Thou *wert* speaking. Our ears are dull,

And we cannot discern in this atmosphere ;

The men, as they drowned, might have clearer sense—

Might have heard Thee well, and seen Thee near.

We all must be patient, and bear our part

In the periled toil of a wreckful world ;

But some Havering Rest may be found at last,

When the anchors are down, and the sails are furled.

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